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Thirtieth session

Summary record of the 639th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 21 January 2004, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Açar

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Fifth periodic report of Germany
(CEDAW/C/DEU/5; CEDAW/PSWG/2004/1/CRP.1/Add.3 and CRP.2/Add.5)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Germany took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Riemann-Hanewinckel** (Germany) welcomed the presence of the representatives of German non-governmental organizations, with whom she, as Parliamentary Secretary of State in the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, maintained an ongoing dialogue. At one such recent meeting she had been presented with their shadow reports.

3. Introducing the fifth periodic report of Germany (CEDAW/C/DEU/5), she said that all the federal Government's measures specified in the report (sect. II, para. 5.3.1) had been either implemented or begun, and the decision to continue the Plan of Action would be taken during the current legislative period. In the light of the Federal Act to Protect against Violence, several Länder had reformed their statutes to avoid a legal vacuum between police action and judicial protection measures. However, more concrete support and advice for victims in negotiating the legal proceedings was clearly required, a need also highlighted in the Berlin women victims' health project — SIGNAL — whose results were soon to be published. Under Germany's Basic Law, it was not for the federal Government but for the Länder to provide homes, counselling and emergency services for battered women. While the federal Government would fulfil its responsibilities, it urged the Länder to provide such facilities, despite the scarcity of funds, in defence of the right to a life free of violence.

4. Pending the evaluation of the status of implementation of the 1994 Employee Protection Act, in addition to work in defining sexual harassment and securing evidence, much needed to be done to encourage women to defend in the courts their rights against employer abuse. The federal Government would take account of the evaluation of the Act when it came to reform it, as required by the transposition of the European Union directives into German Law. The structural changes that lay at the heart of the Plan of Action to Combat Violence against Women called for close cooperation among the relevant federal ministries and between the Federation and the Länder. The steering bodies for implementation of the Plan of Action were the national working group to combat trafficking in women and the Federation-Länder working group to combat domestic violence against women.

5. The cooperation project devised by the specialized counselling services and the Federal Criminal Police Office, on the recommendation of the working group to combat trafficking in women, was implemented in many Länder and viewed in Europe as a successful cooperation effort. In Germany, the European Union's 2003 directive on the short-term residence permits issued to victims of that crime, soon to be officially adopted, was implemented through the Migration Act and ended the uncertain residence status of victimized witnesses, who had hitherto been granted only temporary suspension of deportation. They could now stay in the country for as long as legal or administrative proceedings required. Should they be found to be in danger as a consequence of their testimony, they were granted residence status. The consolidation of such residence status and the strengthening of support measures enhanced the protection and stabilization of victims.

6. Gender mainstreaming was the guiding principle of the federal Government's political action, and projects were under way to implement it in all federal departments. The Gender Competence Centre, recently established in Berlin and for which the federal Government would provide permanent funding, aimed to support gender mainstreaming in all areas of society and provided advice, conducted and coordinated research, pooled know-how and trained experts, attesting to the importance that the federal Government accorded to the concept despite its budget shortages and cuts. Gender mainstreaming had opened a second, broader stage of a dual equality policy, which the federal Government had also advocated to the European Union: gender mainstreaming aimed at structural change while the women-promotion policy still served to eliminate specific discriminatory situations in individual policy areas. The first status report on gender equality, soon to be submitted to Parliament, covered the basic issues of education,

employment, social security and social participation and the difference between the lives of women and men, focusing, among other things, on their wage situation, which called for gender-mainstreaming political action in the various areas.

7. An ideal example of the federal Government's dual-track gender-mainstreaming strategy was development cooperation, in which all sectors were involved and which had been enshrined in the equal-rights concept of the recently overhauled Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development as a binding requirement on all relevant organizations. The idea was to take the specific needs of women and girls into account through projects based on a system agreed within the OEC/DAC framework. Women-specific technical cooperation projects had been allocated 37.4 million euros in 2002 and, in the political dialogue with partner Governments, Germany ensured that women's rights were regarded as human rights. A major German development cooperation concern was to support information campaigns against female genital mutilation, especially in West Africa.

8. The recently established Agenda 2010 introduced far-reaching reform in economics, labour, health, finances and education in order to boost the labour market and modernize German social systems, especially with women and families in mind. Regarding the legal measures for promoting women's employment with the merger of unemployment and social assistance measures into the so-called "unemployment benefit II", job centres were being set up for hard-to-place and long-term unemployed, even if they could not benefit from the unemployment promotion laws. Those measures would particularly benefit women returning to work, single parents and migrant women. Social insurance coverage was now extended to all persons receiving unemployment benefit II. The legislators' current evaluation of the new labour market instruments would cover the impact of the reforms on women.

9. The authorities had commissioned from the research institute, Prognos an analysis of the economic benefits to companies of enabling women to reconcile family life and work. They were setting up a national network of local alliances for family- and women-friendly working conditions, and companies were encouraged to undergo inspections for that purpose. Moreover, the authorities would shortly be submitting an initial evaluation of activities over the previous two years to implement the Agreement to promote the equal opportunities for women and men in private industry, concluded between the federal Government and the German business community. A 2002 business poll had shown that some 23 per cent of all employees worked in an enterprise in which there was either a company agreement or a collective agreement, with 11.4 per cent working in enterprises that provided offers on a voluntary basis. It had been decided that arrangements should be made on both sides of the industry to integrate the European agreement on teleworking into national practice.

10. A 2003 survey had shown a clear difference between women and men in their approach to setting up a business. The newly established National Agency for Female Business Starters encouraged women to set up new companies by means of special training measures and used public relation to improve the entrepreneurial climate for women. If current trends continued, the employment rate among women — currently at 58.5 per cent — should reach the 90 per cent target laid down in the European Union's Lisbon Strategy before 2010.

11. New legislation had introduced a childcare allowance that would enable 150,000 children and their parents to live without social assistance benefits, and single parents would receive tax relief of 1,308 euros, which replaced the household allowance criticized by the Constitutional Court. Ranked in the top 30 per cent of European countries in terms of financial benefits for families, Germany placed last with regard to childcare and education facilities. It intended to provide high-quality services for children and young persons of all ages through local institutions, voluntary organizations, childminders or commercial providers by 2010. The federal Government had earmarked 4 billion euros for all-day schools. Funds made available through savings from the labour-market reforms and the restructured equalization of revenue between the Länder and the federal Government would be used to provide, from 2005, an amount gradually increasing to 1.5 billion euros per year for the municipalities and communities — which should use them in a future-oriented way — to extend high-quality childcare, especially for children under three.

Articles 1-6

12. **Ms. Gabr** said that the introductory statement had provided useful additional data and requested

further information concerning the Secretary of State's past and future meetings with non-governmental organizations, such as the form those meetings had taken in the past and their input into the report under consideration. On the question of stereotypes, while she welcomed the rules and regulations referred to for fighting that kind of bias, there was also need for work with the media, which often distorted the image of women, children and juveniles. She asked whether the authorities envisaged such a step and the possibility of addressing the challenge through the education system. Since the written replies concerning migrant women had been inadequate, she would like to know the delegation's views on the integration of such women as full participants in German society in terms of their beliefs, traditions and so on.

13. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** expressed support for the previous speaker's remarks on stereotypes and took issue with the unconscious acceptance of the stereotyped role of women, as evidenced by the statement that the federal Government enhanced the role of women in the public service, by providing for their special needs in terms of part-time employment. The authorities obviously continued to consider care of the family to be the specific responsibility of women, when it should be shared by men. Although much had been said about the legal, political and other measures taken in favour of victims of abuse in the Plan of Action, she would like to know what types of support they received.

14. **Mr. Flinterman** said that both the fifth periodic report and the delegation's answers to the list of issues and questions appeared to indicate some confusion as to the true meaning of article 4 of the Convention, on temporary special measures. He wondered which of the various measures indicated should be seen as temporary, and which measures would be discontinued once equality had been achieved. Noting that Germany had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention, on complaints procedures, he said that it was important that lawyers in Germany should be aware of the rights covered by the Convention and that he was therefore disappointed at the delegation's general response to the Committee's recommendations following its consideration of Germany's fourth report. He wondered whether the training courses referred to covered the procedures set out in the Optional Protocol, and whether lawyers were encouraged to take such courses.

15. **Ms. Ferrer-Gómez** said that she would appreciate more information about planned legislation aimed at combating violence in general, and violence aimed at women — especially foreigners — in particular. The Committee would also welcome more information about measures to reduce the exploitation of women in advertising and in the media, about violence against women in general, and about measures being taken to counter stereotypical attitudes towards minority and migrant groups.

16. **Ms. Šimonović** asked whether Germany's fifth report had been officially adopted by the Government. The delegation should indicate whether the Convention was directly applicable in Germany, and whether there had been any cases in which the Convention had been invoked. Because very few of the statistics given in the report were broken down by gender and ethnicity, it was hard for the Committee to determine the situation of foreign women, and of the Roma population in particular. The Committee would therefore be grateful if such statistics could be included in Germany's next report.

17. **Ms. Khan** asked about Germany's plans for introducing gender budgeting with a view to closing the socio-economic gap between men and women, and recommended that studies should be undertaken regarding non-discriminatory resource-allocation. Gender budgeting should be introduced into the different areas of the economy, especially the labour market. Germany was to be congratulated on being the only developed country to incorporate the Convention in its development cooperation policies, and she hoped that other countries would follow its example.

18. **Ms. Riemann-Hanewinckel** (Germany) said that Germany had been trying very hard to become less conservative in its approach to implementing the Convention. It had introduced new legislation on parental leave, for example, and had been striving to change stereotypical attitudes regarding the roles of men and women within the family. Until a few years ago, Germany had tended to perceive women's role as limited to the domestic sphere, and needed to intensify its efforts to alter that perception. In that regard, the role of women in western Germany differed from that of women in eastern Germany, who had traditionally been more active in the workplace. However, the main problem was the stereotypical attitudes of men. The Government was tackling that problem by promoting alliances at the local level in an effort to make it clear

that such attitudes were unacceptable. With respect to the procedure for preparing Germany's fifth report, she said that it could not be regarded as having been officially adopted by the Government. However, it would be considered by all political parties in Parliament, whose recommendations the Government would incorporate in the next periodic report.

19. **Ms. Augstein** (Germany) noted that her Government took a multifaceted approach to working with non-governmental organizations, collaborating with certain groups on specific issues, funding campaigns, and supporting national networks. In turn, the support and involvement of such organizations lent strength to Government's demands and promoted the legislative process. For example, non-governmental organizations had been consulted during the formulation of draft legislation on violence against women, resulting in an improved text. Although non-governmental organizations had not taken part in the preparation of the report itself, information provided by them had certainly been included, since the Government was constantly engaged in talks with them on related issues.

20. With respect to prejudices and stereotypes in the media and in advertising, she noted that, since Germany believed in freedom of the press, the Government's ability to exert direct influence was limited, except in the area of penal provisions. However, such attitudes and practices were unacceptable, and the Government did request advertisers to recall offensive advertisements. Moreover, it was especially important to train young people to be critical of advertising, and the Government regarded that task as a high priority.

21. The Government had carried out research into why fathers tended not to take parental leave, and it appeared that traditional attitudes were the key factor. Many men feared that they would lose income or that taking parental leave would be frowned upon in some way by their employers. The Government wished to encourage men to take such leave and to persuade employers that it was a positive practice. With regard to support for victims of violence, she noted that victims were entitled to a wide range of support services, which were funded by the Länder and the municipalities. Lastly, she agreed that there was a certain degree of confusion concerning the meaning of article 4 of the Convention. Germany did not have temporary special measures for a fixed period of time. Certain activities and institutions did sometimes become redundant, perhaps due to lack of funding, but it was not always possible to say when. Moreover, German legislation was never aimed specifically at women, but rather at men and women.

22. Training provided for the judiciary did not specifically address the Convention, but the Convention was included as part of general legal training. The Government would encourage the creation of such training courses, which were the responsibility of the municipalities. She would gladly consider the matter upon her return to Germany, and would recommend such courses if necessary. She could neither confirm nor deny that violence against women was increasing, as there were no comparable data available. The Government was conducting a survey on the extent of the problem and was trying to learn how other European countries dealt with it. It might be possible to set up an emergency hotline for victims, but since Germany was such a large country, it would be a major undertaking. Women victims were, however, able to seek protection and redress. Training was provided to police officers, and data showing the extent of interventions by police did indicate the extent of the problem. Also, legislation had been amended to allow foreign women who had separated from their husbands due to violence to apply for their own residence permit.

23. The Convention was not directly applicable in Germany, but had been incorporated into legal practice. Thus far, there had been no complaints under the Convention, but there would undoubtedly be such cases in the future. Lastly, with respect to gender budgeting, she noted that, although one study was being conducted, Germany was still at an early stage in that area. The preferred strategy was to focus on introducing gender budgeting in the Government's overall budget, but not to extend it to businesses and the general economy. No decision had yet been made, however, and the Government was looking at the experience of other European countries in that field. Its priority was to consider how special budgets might be introduced within all ministries, because that would ensure that all ministries participated, rather than leaving the issue of gender budgeting to a few specific ministries.

24. **Ms. Augstein** (Germany), responding to questions about part-time employment of women, said that the expectations of women in the eastern and western parts of the country were very different.

Studies conducted by the Federal Statistical Office in the framework of the microcensus, and a recent large-scale study on the motives of men and women for seeking part-time employment revealed that the overwhelming majority, almost 75 per cent of women in the west, said that part-time employment helped them to reconcile working life with family responsibilities; more than 50 per cent of women in the east said that they sought part-time work because no full-time jobs were available. The clear majority of working mothers in part-time employment were quite content with their work; in fact they were more content than mothers who did not have a job at all or those who were working full-time.

25. Turning to the efforts to overcome stereotypes in the labour market, she said that a pilot project, which had now become permanent, entitled "Acting in a Partnership Way", targeted young trainees and their trainers in companies. Its aim was to make young people, both males and females, aware of sexual harassment at work and to plan for the issue of reconciling work and family life. On the situation of migrant women, she noted that the findings had not been very informative thus far. Two surveys had been commissioned by the Government and their findings had been received just before the delegation's departure for New York. However, a very preliminary assessment of those findings indicated that young migrant women in Germany faced barriers in education; the women themselves did not feel that they were disadvantaged or discriminated against or that their problems at school had been caused by barriers in society.

26. The education barrier was seen as a result of their own shortcomings and that fact remained a problem for them, which was carried over into their working life. With respect to the situation of migrant women on the labour market, one of the priorities of the Federal Employment Service under the reform concept was to increase the integration of migrant men and women. The Government had put in place additional promotional instruments targeting such groups of people in districts where there was a very high level of unemployment among migrant workers. The Act to reform the labour market would also have a very positive impact on the situation of migrant women. Under the Act, persons who were very hard to place would be looked after by case managers and the barriers encountered as a result of their background would be analysed and remedies found. Offers by job centres ranged from placement to language study and additional training.

27. A recently published migration report of the federal Government provided additional data on the entry of migrant women into Germany. The findings were that the rate of entry of women remained constant as compared to that of men, but that the proportion of women was lower than that of men both as regarded entries and departures. Forty per cent of all entries were women while 37 per cent of all departures were women. For the first time, the federal Government had tried to disaggregate entries and departures by gender. The first report of the federal Government on gender equality would also highlight the different situation of male and female migrants in Germany. In addition, her Ministry intended to carry out a similar exercise in other areas, regularly compiling data and disaggregating them by gender.

28. **Ms. Rogall-Grothe** (Germany), responding to a question about the scarcity of statistical data on discrimination against minorities, in particular the Sinti and Roma, said that German legislation did not differentiate between ethnic groups. They all enjoyed equal protection under the law. The Sinti and Roma were specially protected by various agreements of the Council of Europe, including the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages. Furthermore, the federal Government had adopted a series of measures to encourage the population to overcome discriminatory attitudes.

29. The Alliance against Racism and in Favour of Tolerance was a very broad initiative encompassing all groups of society, whose aim was to overcome prejudices. In addition, more was being done in schools in that regard, including training teachers on how to raise the awareness of children and young people of the need to protect minorities and eschew prejudice. The federal Government was also providing financing to the Central Council of the Sinti and Roma in Germany, and a cultural centre had been established whose activities included combating discrimination and doing away with prejudice. In Germany, there were great reservations concerning the collection of disaggregated statistical data on specific ethnic groups owing to historical sensitivities on the subject.

30. **Ms. González** said that, while she welcomed the adoption by Germany of a Plan of Action to Combat

Violence against Women she did not understand why such a highly-advanced country did not have a system for compiling data on the extent of violence against women, both in the home and in urban and rural areas. Such a system would enable everyone, including the Committee, to know for example whether elderly women, young women or girls suffered from violence. She wondered whether the lack of such data meant that proper importance had not been given to combating violence against women.

31. The Committee had information to the effect that violence against women, particularly domestic violence, was on the rise. So one of two things was true: either women were not being properly educated about their rights in that regard; or it was not considered important for police centres to compile and keep records of those complaints. The delegation should explain how the protection plan was working. The Committee had been told in the course of the oral presentation that Germany did not have an early warning system or hotline, yet in much less developed countries such systems were in place and functioning well.

32. **Ms. Coker-Appiah** expressed appreciation for the efforts of the German Government to deal with the vexing issue of trafficking in women and children for the purposes of prostitution as well as for the various measures that had been put in place to assist the victims of such trafficking and prosecute the traffickers. The measures adopted included the granting of temporary permission to stay in the country for victims who cooperated with the authorities while legal or administrative proceedings were being conducted. She wondered about the situation of the victims during that period, in particular whether they were given work permits to enable them to look after themselves. If not, did the special measures include provision by the authorities of some financial support?

33. **Ms. Manalo**, referring to article 6, noted that the report focused only on the sex industry. She wanted to know about the situation of migrant domestic workers in the households of diplomats in Germany. Some had allegedly been forced to work under a situation similar to that of slavery or of sexual exploitation, with the diplomat exercising exclusive power on the residential status and employment of the helpless domestic worker. That was far from a normal working relationship. In that regard, she referred the delegation to the definition of trafficking in persons under the Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

34. Noting that, for the first time, Germany had developed a comprehensive overall concept of fighting violence against women, she wondered how such a concept applied to abused migrant domestic workers, particularly those who were in the service of diplomats. During the consideration of Germany's previous report, she had raised the issue of the so-called "au pair" system, particularly the allegation that many German embassies provided au pair visas when, in reality, under the pretext of a cultural exchange, the system violated the criteria established by the Government of origin as well as the immigration laws of Germany. There had been no reply in the fifth periodic report to her questions and she would appreciate a verbal reply on that situation at the current meeting.

35. **Ms. Shin** emphasized the importance of partnership with civil society in advancing gender equality at the implementation, policy development and evaluation phases. Regarding article 5, she wondered whether the "paradigm change" mentioned in the report with respect to combating violence against women meant that the focus was now not only on women but also on the behaviour of men and boys. Since attention had shifted to the offenders, the delegation should indicate any changes in the male perception of violence against women and whether men or boys discussed the issue. The Committee wished to know whether the Government had a consistent plan to change the male perception of violence against women through extensive, countrywide awareness-raising campaigns.

36. She wondered about the legal status of migrant women who came to Germany as the spouses of German husbands. Since there was a two-year cohabitation requirement to gain an independent right to stay in Germany, she would appreciate information on what happened if a foreign spouse separated from or divorced her husband because of domestic violence and also wished to know what law applied if there was sexual abuse of the children.

37. **Ms. Morvai** requested data on prostitution in Germany, including the number of prostitutes and their countries of origin, the current trend in and sociological characteristics of prostitution. She wondered whether the Government had attempted to target the demand side of prostitution, namely the

clients, or whether it viewed prostitution as a form of work. The delegation should provide data on any research on the realities of prostitution and its connection to violence against women. The Convention required States parties to adopt a broad strategy against trafficking and prostitution. The Committee wished to know what the Government's strategy was in that regard and whether it had programmes to prevent women from entering into prostitution as an element of its global gender-sensitive aid programmes in the developing countries.

38. The delegation should indicate whether there were rehabilitation programmes to help women get out of prostitution and whether the Government had conducted any research on the relationship between prostitution and trafficking. Noting that the Committee considered the regulation of brothels as being incompatible with the Convention, she sought Germany's position on the issue. According to the Convention, pimping must be criminalized. Yet, according to the report, prostitutes earned wages from some sort of employers. The reporting State should explain who exactly they were.

39. **Ms. Achmad** congratulated the delegation of Germany on its timely and progressive report and the progressive legislation, policies, strategies and programmes that it had outlined. She stressed, however, the absence of comprehensive data on women migrant workers and asylum-seekers. Recognizing that the provision of data broken down into ethnicity, gender, age and marital status was a sensitive undertaking, she said that such disaggregated information was crucial. She would be glad to know if the Competence Centre for Equal Opportunities Policy in the Labour and Service Society of the Twenty-first Century and the federal report on the occupational and income situation of women and men submitted to the Parliament dealt with women migrant workers and asylum-seekers. Finally, she asked whether the Government of Germany would consider encouraging German organizations that provided technical assistance to developing countries to assist those countries in implementing the Convention, particularly with respect to women migrant workers.

40. **Ms. Riemann-Hanewinckel** (Germany) said that, while much had been accomplished by her Government in combating violence against women and children, the subject had been taboo for many decades in both the eastern and western parts of Germany. In the western part, citizens clung to the stereotype that good, conservative families could not give rise to any form of domestic violence. Citizens of the former German Democratic Republic, for their part, also held to a stereotypical notion that no violence could emerge from their good, socialist families. Since 1997, however, awareness about the reality of domestic violence had increased, partly thanks to efforts by the two inter-ministerial working groups mentioned in the report. Nevertheless, her Government had clearly not done enough to break the taboo against discussing violence against women, which remained a sensitive issue.

41. The failure to gain a majority decision in Parliament after heated debates on whether marital rape constituted an offence showed the extent of the silence on male violence against women. Further measures were required to bring legislation in line with the reality of that violence. Lastly, although there were young and middle-aged men who had launched self-help initiatives, greater efforts could be made to encourage men to accept responsibility for their actions. The Government in particular could do more to tackle the problem and raise awareness at all levels of State and society.

42. **Ms. Augstein** (Germany) said that awareness about violence against women had increased since 1975 thanks to the United Nations, which had declared that year International Women's Year. She understood why it might seem strange to some that a country such as hers should lack comprehensive data on violence against women. The issue, until recently, had been relegated to the women's movement. While information had been gathered on victims who had sought help in domestic violence shelters, no statistics were available on other victims. The Federal Act to Protect against Violence was helping to change that situation. Since its adoption in January 2002, data had also been collected on women who had taken legal action against the perpetrators of violence. Those women tended to be better educated and wealthier than women in homes for battered women, who often saw no way out of violent family situations.

43. The legislature, judiciary and police were increasingly aware that violence against women cut across all strata of society. Whereas cases of such violence fell under the category of "family disputes" before adoption of the Act, the notion of "domestic violence" had henceforth been incorporated in police

records, which the police were obliged to turn over to the Government. She noted that her Government had a good hotline programme for battered women, even though it was not always fully funded. One of the difficulties in collecting data on violence against women was finding a common definition of such violence, including psychological and emotional violence. It was also difficult to quantify the incidence of restrictions on women's mobility or the refusal by men to give money to their wives. Although the European Union was working towards a generally acceptable definition of violence against women, it had a long way to go before one could be found.

44. Collecting data on the victims of trafficking in human beings was complicated by the fact that many illegal aliens did not turn to the police out of fear of deportation, a situation her Government was seeking to remedy. Indeed, the Aliens Act dealt with victims of trafficking in human beings, who were given a minimum of four weeks before they were deported. Every effort was made during that period to contact counselling services in their country of origin, so that they would not fall back into the hands of traffickers, and to prepare them for their departure. If they agreed to testify against the traffickers, they were permitted to stay as long as it took to prosecute them, up to four years. The Act on Benefits for Asylum-Seekers granted temporary residents permits to victims of human trafficking if they feared that they would be put in danger upon return. She hoped in that regard that proposed legislation on migration, which would grant far more generous residence entitlements to those victims, such as social security, would be enacted.

45. Trafficking in human beings was also tied to slave labour practices. While there were at present no figures on forced labour, an amendment to the Penal Code would change that situation. With regard to the problem of migrants working at diplomatic missions, although diplomats continued to enjoy immunity, every effort had been made through diplomatic channels to ensure fair labour practices. Moreover, migrant victims of exploitation had recourse to protection under German law. Several public awareness campaigns had been launched to overcome gender stereotypes, including posters showing ordinary men engaged in sexual harassment at the work place, at home and in public, which served as a wake-up call for many people. Efforts had also been made to organize meetings with boys and girls to discuss stereotypical roles, although boys were reluctant to participate in such groups and there were difficulties in finding well-trained supervisors.

46. The Aliens Act exempted victims of domestic abuse from the provision that foreign nationals married to German citizens received residence permits only after two years of marriage. In cases of domestic violence, women were immediately granted permits. Various studies had been conducted on the reasons why women became prostitutes and on their situation as well as on the clients, with a view to keeping them from engaging in unprotected sex and spreading sexually transmitted diseases. Another study was done on sexual tourism and the sexual exploitation of children, against which a broad public awareness campaign had been launched. Although there were no precise figures on prostitutes, they were estimated to number some 200,000 in Germany, compared to 3,000 in Sweden.

47. There were 1,500 known cases of victims of human trafficking per year. The Act to Improve the Legal and Social Situation of Prostitutes was closer to Netherlands than Swedish legislation, which was geared towards punishing the clients. It avoided describing prostitution as immoral and beyond the pale of the law, which tended to further marginalize and exacerbate the exploitation of prostitutes, and was aimed at providing them with legal protections. In Parliament, some had argued that prostitution should be considered regular employment; others sought to improve the situation of prostitutes, but not brothel owners; yet others called for an outright ban. A review of the Act was planned for 2005, when data would have been collected to gauge whether the situation of prostitutes had improved. Lastly, prostitutes were offered the opportunity to withdraw from the trade through retraining programmes under the Act to Reform Training Promotion. Lastly, the Competence Centre for Women was established as a focal point that steered Government agencies in the areas of defence, economics, labour, transportation, migration, among others, to appropriate sources of information and advised them on how to conduct and properly implement gender analyses. The Centre had an excellent web site that served as an important source of information on gender-related issues for government ministries.

48. **Ms. Gaspard**, congratulating the delegation of Germany for having surpassed the target of 30 per cent

of women representatives in the Bundestag, said that the next periodic report should include data on the representation of women in the Bundesrat, broken down by Länder and municipalities. She noted with interest the importance of municipal committees in ensuring equal opportunities for men and women, since equality must be built at the level of local communities. Information on whether the federal Government had incorporated a gender perspective in local policies would be welcome. With respect to article 7 of the Convention, she noted that 21.4 per cent of federal bodies had no women representatives, according to the report, and would like to know what specific bodies were involved. Lastly, concerning article 8, she drew attention to the fact that only 7 per cent of German ambassadors were women and asked what was holding back women's participation in diplomacy and what specific steps the Government was taking to reverse that situation.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.